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THEOSOPHY

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. LXII 1973-1974

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OBJECTS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

I *To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;*

II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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Remember, thou that fightest for man's liberation, each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time.

—The Voice of the Silence

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 62 NOVEMBER, 1973 NUMBER 1

THE HUMAN TASK AND DESTINY

A NEW note of responsibility is sounded with increasing frequency in relation to man's interdependence with the world around him. Distinguished scholars have written papers condemning the ruthless exploitation of nature, and leading writers call attention to the reverence felt by simple peoples for the creatures and life in the kingdoms. A well known poet, much admired by the young, writes with great feeling about Buddhist conceptions of the reciprocity of all life, and an eminent economist espouses Gandhian ideas and has published an article advocating "Buddhist economics." The distinguished conservationist, Aldo Leopold, proclaimed only a few years ago that respect for and even love of the land and its creatures is required of men if they are to achieve harmonious relationships with Nature, and all these ideas are now being echoed and spread by others. There is, one may say, the beginning of spontaneous recognition of the brotherhood of all that lives, an awareness that will surely grow stronger in the cycle to come.

This development, which promises to become a deep-rooted cultural attitude, seems a part of that great awakening of the human spirit which H. P. Blavatsky heralded long ago in her article, "The Tidal Wave." Its expression, today, should do much to prepare the mind of the race for a more explicit and philosophical understanding of the nature of man. For man is not only the sharer with other forms of life in the beneficence of the world: he is also, in

principle, the pivotal agency of world development and evolution, since his inner purpose and work is that of the hierarchy of the Manasa-Putra. In few and simple words, Mr. Judge presents this conception of man at the end of his article, "Universal Applications of Doctrine":

> Now during a manwantara or period of manifestation, the egos incarnating must use over and over again in any world upon which they are incarnating the matter that belongs to it.
>
> So, therefore, we are now using in our incarnations matter that has been used by ourselves and other egos over and over again, and are affected by the various tendencies impressed in it. And, similarly, we are leaving behind us for future races that which will help or embarrass them in their future lives.
>
> This is a highly important matter, whether reincarnation be a true doctrine or not. For if each new nation is only a mass of new egos or souls, it must be much affected by the matter-environment left behind by nations and races that have disappeared forever.
>
> But for us who believe in reincarnation it has additional force, showing us one strong reason why universal brotherhood should be believed in and practiced.
>
> The other branch of the responsibility is just as serious. The doctrine that removes death from the universe and declares that all is composed of innumerable lives, constantly changing places with each other, contains in it of necessity the theory that man himself is full of these lives and that all are traveling up the long road of evolution.
>
> The secret doctrine holds that we are full of kingdoms of entities who depend upon us, so to say, for salvation.
>
> How enormous, then, is this responsibility, that we not only are to be judged for what we do with ourselves as a whole, but also for what we do for those unseen beings who are dependent upon us for light.

We may see here an exposition of Theosophical "ecology," since Mr. Judge presents the metaphysical side of the interdependence of man and the kingdoms of nature, appealing to the higher perceptive powers of mind. To what he says might be added a passage from *The Secret Doctrine,* in which the role of present mankind in the far distant future is described:

> The next great Manvantara will witness the men of our own life-cycle becoming the instructors and guides of a mankind whose Monads may now yet be imprisoned—semi-conscious—in the most intellectual of the animal kingdom, while their

lower principles will be animating, perhaps, the highest specimens of the Vegetable world. (I, 267.)

Modern ecology is slowly evolving toward an understanding of the vast reciprocity of all life, while the Theosophic teaching deepens this idea with the teaching of an all-inclusive reciprocity of mind and soul. Heroic energies will be needed, in the years to come, if the great reforms now recognized as necessary are to be accomplished. It may well be that the resources required can be found only through progressive realization of the spiritual nature of human beings, and increasing recognition of the high mission and labors assumed by the incarnating host of mind-born beings, long ages ago. A sense of destiny has always been the inspiration and sustaining force behind great achievement, and the teaching of the spiritual origin and Promethean intent of mankind, clearly revealed only in Theosophy, was intended to awaken human beings to these inner resources belonging to all.

Signs of the Future

Look around you and behold. Think of what you see and hear, and draw therefrom your conclusions. The age of crass materialism, of Soul insanity and blindness, is swiftly passing away. A death struggle between Mysticism and Materialism is no longer at hand, but is already raging. And the party which will win the day at this supreme hour will become the master of the situation and of the future; *i.e.*, it will become the autocrat and sole disposer of the *millions* of men already born and to be born, up to the latter end of the twentieth century. If the signs of the times can be trusted it is not the *Animalists* who will remain conquerors. This is warranted us by the many brave and prolific authors and writers who have arisen of late to defend the rights of Spirit to reign over matter. Many are the honest, aspiring Souls now raising themselves like a dead wall against the torrent of the muddy waters of Materialism. And facing the hitherto domineering flood which is still steadily carrying off into unknown abysses the fragments from the wreck of the dethroned, cast down Human Spirit, they now command: "So far has thou come; but thou shalt go no further!"

—H. P. Blavatsky

THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE

IF the student bears in mind that there is but One Universal Element, which is infinite, unborn, and undying, and that all the rest—as in the world of phenomena—are but so many various differentiated aspects and transformations (correlations, they are now called) of that One, from Cosmical down to microcosmical effects, from super-human down to human and sub-human beings, the totality, in short, of objective existence—then the first and chief difficulty will disappear and Occult Cosmology may be mastered.

From *Gods* to *men,* from Worlds to atoms, from a star to a rush-light, from the Sun to the vital heat of the meanest organic being—the world of Form and Existence is an immense chain, whose links are all connected. The law of Analogy is the first key to the world-problem, and these links have to be studied co-ordinately in their occult relation to each other.

It is impossible that Karma could readjust the balance of power in the world's life and progress, unless it had a broad and general line of action. It is held as a truth among Theosophists that the interdependence of Humanity is the cause of what is called Distributive Karma, and it is this law which affords the solution to the great question of collective suffering and its relief. It is an occult law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the same way, no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone. In reality, there is no such thing as "Separateness"; and the nearest approach to that selfish state, which the laws of life permit, is in the intent or motive.

The word "supernatural" implies *above or outside* of nature. Nature and Space are one. Now Space for the metaphysician exists outside of any act of sensation, and is a purely subjective representation; materialism, which would connect it forcibly with one or the other datum of sensation, notwithstanding. For our senses, *it is fairly subjective* when independent of anything within it. How

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NOTE.—A student's collation from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky.

then can any phenomenon, or anything else, *step outside of or be performed beyond that which has no limits?* But when spatial extension becomes simply conceptual, and is thought of in an idea connected with certain actions, as by the materialists and the physicists, then again they have hardly a right to define and claim that which can or cannot be produced by Forces generated within even limited spaces, as they have not even an approximate idea of what those forces are.

An Occultist practises *scientific* Theosophy, based on accurate knowledge of Nature's secret workings; but a Theosophist, practising the powers called abnormal, *minus* the light of Occultism, will simply tend toward a dangerous form of mediumship, because, although holding to Theosophy and its highest conceivable code of ethics, he practises it in the dark, on sincere but *blind* faith. Anyone, Theosophist or Spiritualist, who attempts to cultivate one of the branches of Occult science—e.g., Hypnotism, Mesmerism, or even the secrets of producing physical phenomena, etc.—without the knowledge of the philosophic *rationale* of those powers, is like a rudderless boat launched on a stormy ocean.

The experiments made in Hypnotism and Mesmerism at the present time are experiments of unconscious, when not of conscious Black Magic. The road is wide and broad which leads to such destruction; and it is but too easy to find; and only too many go ignorantly along it to their own destruction. But the practical cure for it lies in one thing. That is the course of study which I mentioned before. It sounds very simple, but is eminently difficult; for that cure is "ALTRUISM." And this is the keynote of Theosophy and the cure for all ills; this it is which the real Founders of the Theosophical Society promote as its first object—UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

Occult philosophy divulges few of its most important vital mysteries. It drops them like precious pearls, one by one, far and wide apart, and only when forced to do so by the evolutionary tidal wave that carries on humanity slowly, silently, but steadily toward the dawn of the Sixth-Race mankind. For once out of the safe custody of their legitimate heirs and keepers, those mysteries cease to be occult: they fall into the public domain and have to run the risk of becoming in the hands of the selfish—of the *Cains* of the human race—curses more often than blessings.

The *etheric* Force, discovered by the well-known (in America and now in Europe) John Worrell Keely, of Philadelphia, is no *hallucination.* Notwithstanding his failure to utilize it, a failure prognosticated and maintained by some Occultists from the first, the phenomena exhibited by the discoverer during the last few years have been wonderful, almost miraculous, not in the sense of the *supernatural* but of the *superhuman.*

If the question is asked why Mr. Keely was not allowed to pass a certain limit, the answer is easy; because that which he has unconsciously discovered, is the terrible sidereal Force, known to, and named by the Atlanteans MASH-MAK, and by the Aryan Rishis in their *Ashtar Vidya* by a name we do not like to give. It is the *vril* of Bulwer Lytton's "Coming Race," and of the coming races of our mankind. The name vril may be a fiction; the Force itself is a fact doubted as little in India as the existence itself of their Rishis, since it is mentioned in all the secret works. . . .

What Mr. Keely has already done is grand and wonderful in the extreme; there is enough work before him in the demonstration of his new system to "humble the pride of those scientists who are materialistic, by revealing those mysteries which lie behind the world of matter," without revealing it *nolens volens* to all. . . . The discovery in its completeness is by several thousand—or shall we say hundred thousand?—years *too premature.* It will be at its appointed place and time only when the great roaring flood of starvation, misery, and underpaid labour ebbs back again—as it will when happily at last the just demands of the many are attended to; when the proletariat exists but in name, and the pitiful cry for bread, that rings throughout the world unheeded, has died away. This may be hastened by the spread of learning, and by new opening for work and emigration, with better prospects than exist now, *and on some new continent that may appear.* Then only will "Keely's Motor and Force," as *originally contemplated* by himself and friends, be in demand, because *it will be more needed by the poor than by the wealthy.*

SELFISHNESS, the first-born of Ignorance, and the fruit of the teaching which asserts that for every newly-born infant a new soul, *separate and distinct* from the Universal Soul, is "created"—this Selfishness is the impassable wall between the *personal* Self and Truth. It is the prolific mother of all human vices, *Lie* being born

out of the necessity for dissembling, and Hypocrisy out of the desire to mask *Lie*. It is the fungus growing and strengthening with age in every human heart in which it has devoured all better feelings. Selfishness kills every noble impulse in our natures, and is the one deity, fearing no faithlessness or desertion from its votaries. Hence, we see it reign supreme in the world and in so-called fashionable society. As a result, we live, and move, and have our being in this god of darkness under his trinitarian aspect of Sham, Humbug, and Falsehood, called RESPECTABILITY.

In the present state of society, especially in so-called civilized countries, we are continually brought face to face with the fact that large numbers of people are suffering from misery, poverty and disease. Their physical condition is wretched, and their mental and spiritual faculties are often almost dormant. On the other hand, many persons at the opposite end of the social scale are leading lives of careless indifference, material luxury, and selfish indulgence. Neither of these forms of existence is mere chance. Both are the effects of the conditions which surround those who are subject to them, and the neglect of social duty on the one side is most closely connected with the stunted and arrested development on the other. In sociology, as in all branches of true science, the law of universal causation holds good. But this causation necessarily implies, as its logical outcome, that human solidarity on which Theosophy so strongly insists. If the action of one reacts on the lives of all, and this is the true scientific idea, then it is only by all men becoming brothers and all women sisters, and by all practising in their daily lives true brotherhood and true sisterhood, that the real human solidarity, which lies at the root of the elevation of the race, can ever be attained. It is this action and interaction, this true brotherhood and sisterhood, in which each shall live for all and all for each, which is one of the fundamental Theosophical principles that every Theosophist should be bound, not only to teach, but to carry out in his or her individual life.

The Church (or churches) maintain that the only saving principle is belief in Jesus, or the carnalized Christ of the soul-killing dogma; theosophy, undogmatic and unsectarian, answers, it is not so. The only *saving* principle dwells in man himself, and has never dwelt outside of his immortal divine self, *i.e.*, it is the true Christos, as it is the true Buddha, the divine inward light which proceeds from the eternal unmanifesting unknown ALL. And this light *can*

only be made known by its works—faith in it having to remain ever blind in all, save in the man himself who feels that light within his soul.

It can do so only by passing *individually* and *personally, i.e.,* spiritually and physically, through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated Universe. It has, therefore, after having gained such experience in the lower kingdoms, and having ascended higher and still higher with every rung on the ladder of being, to pass through every experience on the human planes. In its very essence it is THOUGHT, and is, therefore, called in its plurality *Manasa putra,* "the Sons of the (Universal) mind." This *individualized* "Thought" is what we Theosophists call the *real* human EGO, the thinking Entity imprisoned in a case of flesh and bones. This is surely a Spiritual Entity, not *Matter*, and such Entities are the incarnating EGOS that inform the bundle of animal matter called mankind, and whose names are *Manasa* or "Minds." But once imprisoned, or incarnate, their essence becomes dual: that is to say, the *rays* of the eternal divine Mind, considered as individual entities, assume a two-fold attribute which is (*a*) their *essential* inherent characteristic, heaven-aspiring mind (higher *Manas*), and (*b*) the human quality of thinking, or animal cogitation, rationalized owing to the superiority of the human brain, the *Kama*-tending or lower Manas.

The Theosophist who desires to enter upon occultism takes some of Nature's privileges into his own hands, by that very wish, and soon discovers that experiences come to him with double-quick rapidity. His business is then to recognize that he is under a—to him—new and swifter law of development, and to snatch at the lessons that come to him.

As soon as he begins to understand what a friend and teacher pain can be, the Theosophist stands appalled before the mysterious problem of human life, and though he may long to do good works, equally dreads to do them wrongly until he has himself acquired greater power and knowledge. The ignorant doing of good works may be vitally injurious, as all but those who are blind in their love of benevolence are compelled to acknowledge. For it is not the spirit of self-sacrifice, or of devotion, or of desire to help that is lacking, but the strength to acquire knowledge and power and intuition, so that the deeds done shall really be worthy of the

"Buddha-Christ" spirit. Therefore it is that Theosophists cannot pose as a body of philanthropists, though secretly they may adventure on the path of good works. They profess to be a body of learners merely, pledged to help each other and all the rest of humanity, so far as in them lies, to a better understanding of the mystery of life, and to a better knowledge of the peace which lies beyond it.

But as it is an inexorable law, that the ground must be tilled if the harvest is to be reaped, so Theosophists are obliged to work in the world unceasingly, and very often in doing this to make serious mistakes, as do all workers who are not embodied Redeemers. Their efforts may not come under the title of good works, and they may be condemned as a school of idle talkers, yet they are an outcome and fruition of this particular moment of time, when the ideas which they hold are greeted by the crowd with interest; and therefore their good work is good, as the lotus-flower is good when it opens in the midday sun.

None know more keenly and definitely than they that good works are necessary; only these cannot be rightly accomplished without knowledge. Yet it is an absolute fact that without good works the spirit of brotherhood would die in the world; and this can never be. Therefore is the double activity of learning and doing most necessary; we have to do good, and we have to do it rightly, with knowledge.

It is well known that the first rule of the society is to carry out the object of forming the nucleus of a universal brotherhood. The practical working of this rule was explained by those who laid it down, to the following effect:—

HE WHO DOES NOT PRACTISE ALTRUISM; HE WHO IS NOT PREPARED TO SHARE HIS LAST MORSEL WITH A WEAKER OR POORER THAN HIMSELF; HE WHO NEGLECTS TO HELP HIS BROTHER MAN OF WHATEVER RACE, NATION, OR CREED, WHENEVER AND WHEREVER HE MEETS SUFFERING, AND WHO TURNS A DEAF EAR TO THE CRY OF HUMAN MISERY; HE WHO HEARS AN INNOCENT PERSON SLANDERED, WHETHER A BROTHER THEOSOPHIST OR NOT, AND DOES NOT UNDERTAKE HIS DEFENSE AS HE WOULD UNDERTAKE HIS OWN —IS NO THEOSOPHIST.

FROM "THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM"

The Karma of Birth

Are there well-authenticated cases on record of clairvoyance in persons born blind, where correct descriptions of things have been given as they appear to the organ of sight?

W.Q.J.—I have heard of one or two such cases, but as now they cannot be produced they are not of present value. But it is well known that blind people have ideas as to objects and localities which they have never perceived as those who do have perfect sight. In these cases they must have concepts, probably the same as those arising in others from good sight. This, however, is not clairvoyance. It is, however, certain that cases such as the question calls for must be very rare, inasmuch as blind people would not be usually credited with clairvoyance, but would, in telling of places, naturally be thought to describe scenes of the imagination. Furthermore, it is extremely doubtful if a clairvoyant blind from birth could have possession of terms to use in describing objects so as to be understood by others not blind.

What is the Theosophical view of "Obsession?" Are the New Testament accounts of "casting out devils" to be regarded as literally true? If so, is it a retribution coming under the law of Karma, as with persons under seven years of age? There are cases where the so-called obsessing power seems so far superior in force of will as to be wholly irresistible by the victim: where is the remedy?

W.Q.J.—The T.S. has no "view" about obsession. All on such subjects must be the expression of individual opinion. The editor appears to intimate that there are really no cases of obsession, and if that is the intention of the answer, it must result from the fact that he has never met a case. It is true that as superstition abates instances of obsession do also, but that does not prove the phenomena to be the product wholly of belief in their possibility. Nor do the writings of men like Lecky prove much to my mind on these topics, since he thinks from a standpoint entirely at variance with mine. Since I have, in common with many other members

of the Society, known of clear cases of obsession, no amount of argument by one who had never encountered such would be of any avail; and it is quite likely that those who do not believe in the possibility of these abnormal occurrences will never meet one, because the mind is not directed in that direction.

There are obsessions, then, as we think from observation, but the classes of obsession given in the first answer, two in number only, are not adequate. We have to include in obsession that most mysterious thing—insanity. Physicians do not understand this affliction. They cannot explain how a man suddenly loses his identity and becomes a raving maniac. Or in milder cases, where a man periodically becomes for months at a time some other person wtih no memory of the former state, and so relapses from one to the other. I know of such a case in which a boy first showed this form of insanity, and has gone on for years with the alternation of per-sonality until now he is of age. His trouble would long ago have brought him to the insane asylum if it were not that he was born in a rich and fortunate family. What is to be said of such cases? Are they voluntary or not? They do not come under either of the heads in the answer by the editor. As they are wholly involuntary, is free-will invaded or justice dethroned? I think not. Karma rules in this as in all else, and it is only when one limits his view of karma to this one life that he can be confused. Acts in a former life set up such tendencies in the ocean of life that when the ego came back again it was sure to one day become insane, which only means that a disarrangement of astral and physical forces was brought about resulting in a total inability to correlate the soul and body, and this is called insanity. It was free-will that laid down the causes, and free-will has no power to alter the effects. But, as in the case I cited, there may be meliorations brought about by karma in the same way. For in that one we see—as is often not the case with others—that the poor insane person is protected by reason of the effect of another kind of karma, and is in this long insane or obsessed life cared for and made as happy as is possible. Remember, the mind of each is connected with the body in a certain definite manner and not merely in an imaginary way. This definite method is by certain channels and filaments or nerves: among the most difficult to explain are the magnetic and electric ties for the mind.

Now our hold upon the body we have been born into may be

so weak that we are not able to keep possession of these channels, and stronger forces may even unconsciously go in where we have tried to stay. This is not caprice any more than it is caprice that water will leak from a tank if there be any cracks. So there may come a time that the building called the body, which we hoped to occupy for a long time, becomes so imperfect that our mental tenancy is no longer possible and we drift off altogether, leaving it to the use of other forces or intelligences good or bad; or, as is often the case, we are now driven out for a time and then again get complete possession for a short term, until in that process the cords of magnetism and the electric channels are clogged up or destroyed so far as we are concerned, when we leave altogether.

All this of course may happen by what is called the man's own will or act, as where one suffers from paresis brought about by gross dissipation, but all the cases are not of this kind, nor are they all due to spiritualistic *séances*. As to remedies, those suggested by the editor are good, but there are others possible by the use of strong magnetism used by one who knows all these laws in every detail and can intelligently apply the remedy.

In a recent discussion upon Karma a prominent Theosophist contended that at death a regular balance-sheet of good and bad Karma was, as it were, automatically made, and the resultant, always bad Karma, was what guided the next incarnation. That the product was always bad Karma, he stated, was proven by the fact that the particular Ego incarnated at all; incarnation being considered a misfortune and necessarily resulting from evil Karma. The other side of the controversy maintained that there was no such process as could be analogued to a balance-sheet; that both good and bad Karma held over; that good Karma as well as bad necessitates reincarnation; and that the future condition of the Ego is the resultant modifications of some or all of both kinds of Karma. The point was unsettled. Will not the FORUM *illuminate us?*

W.Q.J.—Sorry to disagree from the Editor, but I must on the distinct assertion that "Karma is not the cause of incarnation." The word *Karma* means "action." Each incarnation of a being is action; each manifestation of a system of worlds is action on the part of the entities that manifest. It is our Karma that brings us into whatever sort of body, in no matter what sort of environ-

ment, with whatever character, good or bad, high or low, broad or narrow. Karma in respect to things about us produces circumstances of environment, of change, for reward, for punishment, for pleasure or for pain. As to ourselves considered as moral beings, it produces from life to life a *tendency* for good, virtuous, wise actions and thoughts, or the reverse. Thus we see one man of lofty character environed by circumstances of the most painful nature, while another of a bestial or vicious character is placed where all circumstances appear to be pleasant. Which is good or bad Karma here? And what is the formula to determine whether Karma is good or bad? In the case of the good man surrounded by adversity it may well be good Karma, if so be that it strengthens him and broadens his sympathies; while with the other it may be wholly bad, since he only wallows in the mud of sensuality, thus redeepening his evil tendencies. "Good Karma—or action—is that which is pleasing, and bad that which is displeasing, to the Higher Self."

So too the balance-sheet illustration is good, for it is by a balancing of our Karma that we arrive here at such and such a place, with such and such a character, to experience differences of environment. That Karma which works on circumstances may be ordinarily unpleasant and thus by some called bad, but our character, acquired by other Karma, may be such as to enable us to triumph over adversity and now glean help and strength from the field badly sown in other lives by error or by mischance. So to me the discussion seems to have proceeded on wrong lines, while each of the disputants was right in his way but made wrong application. Karma is a doctrine too vast and complicated to be disposed of by set rules applied like balance-sheets to commercial enterprises; but one thing is certain—Karma is action viewed from every side and on each occasion.

If all our sufferings in this life are caused by the misdeeds of a former life, how can any combination of sidereal influences at birth affect our fate?

W.Q.J.—A thorough acquaintance with the doctrine of Karma and with what is actually claimed for Astrology by those qualified to speak, would result in an answer to this question. Astrology is not soothsaying nor card-reading; reading omens is soothsaying; reading cards is a form of divination: Astrology is neither of these. All

that is claimed for it is that the whole assemblage of stars indicate, as being a vast machine or clockwork, just exactly what is the state or condition of any one spot in the whole mass. Is this any more absurd than to say that a watchmaker can tell from the movements of a watch just where the hands will be at any particular moment, and likewise from the hands alone where the different cogs and other parts are within? If common minds, and ignorant as well as venal practitioners of Astrology, make a stock of their imitations, wrong conceptions, and base uses of it, that is no reason why the FORUM should sweepingly denounce Astrology. As well denounce real Christianity because of the base coinage labelled with its name. Taking now the oft-made assertion that "Karma governs all worlds up to that of Brahma," we reply to the question that our Karma and the stars are inextricably linked together, for if we had no Karma there would for us be no stars. It is just because the Karma of any being at birth is fixed from his prior one that the great clockwork of the skies shows unerringly to the sage —but not to the dabbler nor to the modern abusers of Astrology —the Karma or present fate of the being. But if, as so often done by even the best of Theosophists, we separate any part of our universe from any other portion, putting one under the influence of Karma and another not, then of course such questions as this one cannot be answered. The doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion are naught if not all-embracing, are useless and misleading if not applicable to the greatest as well as the very least of circumstances or worlds; and so we answer that not only do sidereal positions *indicate* our Karma, but even the very clouds, the wind, and the hour of the day or night in which we may be born, do the same.

(Questions and answers included in this installment are reprinted from the following issues of the *Theosophical Forum*, in this sequence: June, 1891; April, 1891; March, 1892; July, 1890.)

letters • questions • comment

It is well known that the mind and the body influence each other reciprocally. Since a well-nourished and healthy body makes an efficient vehicle for the inner man, what would provide proper nourishment for the mental and moral nature, and how might it affect the reciprocal relationship between body and mind?

A well-nourished and healthy body is undoubtedly desirable, but that it makes an efficient vehicle for the inner man cannot be assumed without some qualifications, for the end in view for man is not the attainment of physical health, however desirable that may be. The being "man" has capabilities which fit him to serve far higher purposes. His ability to identify himself with any form in nature through the use of mind makes him the custodian, in a sense, of the evolution of all of nature. Thus, he is responsible for learning to understand the harmonies of all beings. It seems obvious that this cannot be accomplished without also discovering which actions disrupt in a destructive way, and which neglect a lesser harmony in the process of generating a higher one. From this standpoint, a body afflicted with dis-ease may provide the conditions needed for the ego to learn in principle how to create, maintain, and restore equilibrium in relation to the "lives" involved.

A similar rule must apply to man's inner vehicles, too. The "lives" which make up our astral, psychic and mental natures are serviceable, or sluggish and recalcitrant, depending upon how we have used them in the past—an association extending back in time through many lives. Looking only as far back as childhood, the modern psychological view that what we are now is largely a result of how we have been treated has an evident reasonableness. Quite plainly, people are influenced by the treatment they receive from others, and children, busy with understanding anew the contents of the world in which they have so recently arrived, are especially affected by adults and others who surround them. But if we are reincarnating egos, this explanation of how we have acquired our natures is only a part of the truth. Childhood is indeed the period when both the strengths and the weaknesses which have

been acquired in the past are built into the present incarnation—in concrete form, so to speak—these being the mental, moral, psychic habits of thought we have in this life. But, growing up, we continue to experience whatever comes to us through mental perceptions. It is, therefore, always possible for one determined to shape his own destiny to uncover these influences, to examine them, and to assess their consistency with the wider ideals born from a maturing sense of reality. As Mr. Judge says in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita:* "Man, made of thought, occupant only of many bodies from time to time, is eternally thinking. His chains are through thought, his release due to nothing else."

Thus the nourishment of the inner man is continually *chosen* in the form of the thoughts, feelings, desires, and aspirations to which he gives hospitality and which become the structure and substance of the inner nature. Being assimilated, these thoughts mature as attitudes of the incarnated intelligence—useful, dependable, and liberating, or deceptive and confining, according to whether they reinforce our sense of separateness or enlarge our knowledge and feeling of identity with others. These attitudes also modify all the perceptions which pass through the mind; but new ideas which come to us may provide the opportunity to re-examine and to alter basic views. We are host to all these possibilities. It is true, of course, that the relationship between body and mind reflects this continual process, the physical body often exhibiting its most concrete effects.

The best nourishment, then, in any field of action, mental or physical, comes from choosing for reflection ideas which will facilitate skill in the performance of *egoic* purposes—"yoga." But just as there is no physical food or practice which of itself will assure health, so the value of the ideas we admit to our minds will depend on their use, on how they clarify our daily thinking. What Mr. Judge has to say about the nourishing of the "gods," spoken of in the *Gita* in connection with the ancient meaning of sacrifice, is pertinent to the nourishment of man's inner nature. Of this wheel of mutual sacrifice described by Krishna, Judge says:

> He makes it very clear that he refers to the principle of revolving; that is, each being must live according to that rule, reciprocity or Brotherhood. And this he declares must be kept or else he lives a life of sin to no purpose.

The nature of this reciprocity is further indicated by a passage

in an article by Robert Crosbie in *The Friendly Philosopher* (p. 214):

> The laws of nature are but the interrelations and interdependence of all the beings concerned in this stream of evolution. The forces of nature do not exist of themselves. There never was a force of any kind that was not the result of intelligent action. We as spiritual beings are eternally creating forces; for every man's brain and every thought has a dynamic power. Are they lost? No: all the thoughts, all the feelings of all the beings in the universe, provide a store of dynamic energy which constitutes the forces, as we know them, of nature. We draw upon that general reservoir of force in accordance with the ideas held and in accord with our present inward nature. All the time we are adding to the powers of nature for good or for evil. So, too, we are taking from the powers of nature the additions which other beings have put in—the forces which other beings have aroused in nature.

There are, moreover, ideas which tend to arouse the mind to recognize itself as the creator of all its mental productions, while reserving independence of all these works. And it is this "witness" who is, finally, the maker, judge, and harvester of all human creations. By strengthening this self-awareness we become able to discriminate between the Buddhic and the Kamic aspects of the stream of thoughts and desires which make the environment of our inner life. And so, in the course of time, the true man takes charge, learning to correct his mental and psychic misconceptions, to clarify the sheaths of the psyche so that, in the end, harmony is established throughout the nature.

Again in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita,* Mr. Judge speaks of the importance of these avenues of perception, as the means to knowledge:

> . . . The soul, in order to at last reach the objective plane where its experience is gained, places upon itself, one after the other, various sheaths, each having its peculiar property and function. The mere physical brain is thus seen to be only the material organ first used by the real percipient in receiving or conveying ideas and perceptions; and so with all the other organs, they are only the special seats for centralizing the power of the real man in order to experience the modifications of nature at that particular spot.

WHAT OUR SOCIETY NEEDS MOST

THE first object of our Society is the formation of a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood. This is a practical object and at the same time a fact in nature. It has been long regarded by the greater number of men as an Utopian ideal, one that might be held up, talked about, desired, but impossible of attainment. And it was no wonder that people so regarded it, because the ordinary religious view of God, nature, and man placed everything on a selfish basis, offered personal distinction in heaven to the saints who might die in the odor of sanctity, and thus made impossible the realization of this beautiful dream. But when the Theosophical philosophy shows that there is a unity among beings not only in their better natures but also on the physical plane, our first object becomes most practical. For if all men are brothers in fact, that is, joined one to another by a tie which no one can break, then the formation of the nucleus for the future brotherhood is something that has to do with all the affairs of man, affects civilizations, and leads to the physical as well as moral betterment of each member of the great family.

This first object means philanthropy. Each Theosophist should therefore not only continue his private or public acts of charity, but also strive to so understand Theosophical philosophy as to be able to expound it in a practical and easily understood manner, so that he may be a wider philanthropist by ministering to the needs of the inner man. This inner man is a thinking being who feeds upon a right or wrong philosophy. If he is given that one which is wrong, then, becoming warped and diseased, he leads his instrument, the outer man, into bewilderment and sorrow.

Now as Theosophical theories were and are still quite strange, fascinating, and peculiar when contrasted with the usual doctrines of men and things, very many members have occupied themselves with much metaphysical speculation or with diving into the occult and the wonderful, forgetting that the higher philanthropy calls for a spreading among men of a right basis for ethics, for thought, for action. So we often find Theosophists among themselves debat-

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NOTE.—This article by Wm. Q. Judge first appeared in the *Path*, September, 1892.

ing complicated doctrines that have no present application to practical life, and at the same time other members and some enquirers breathing a sigh of relief when anyone directs the inquiries into such a channel as shall cause all the doctrines to be extended to daily life and there applied.

What we most need is such a Theosophical education as will give us the ability to expound Theosophy in a way to be understood by the ordinary person. This practical, clear exposition is entirely possible. That it is of the highest importance there can be no doubt whatever. It relates to and affects ethics, everyday life, every thought, and consequently every act. The most learned, astute, and successful church, the Roman Catholic, proceeds on this basis. Should we refrain from a good practise because a bigot takes the same method? The priests of Rome do not explain, nor attempt to explain or expound, the highly metaphysical and obscure, though important, basis of their various doctrines. They touch the people in their daily life, a knowledge of their own system in all its details enabling them to put deep doctrine into every man's language, although the learning of the preacher may be temporarily concealed. With them the appeal is to fear; with us it is to reason and experience. So we have a natural advantage which ought not to be overlooked.

High scholarship and a knowledge of metaphysics are good things to have, but the mass of the people are neither scholars nor metaphysicians. If our doctrines are of any such use as to command the efforts of sages in helping on to their promulgation, then it must be that those sages—our Masters—desire the doctrines to be placed before as many of the mass as we can reach. This our Theosophical scholars and metaphysicians can do by a little effort. It is indeed a little difficult, because slightly disagreeable, for a member who is naturally metaphysical to come down to the ordinary level of human minds in general, but it can be done. And when one does do this, the reward is great from the evident relief and satisfaction of the inquirer.

It is preëminently our duty to be thus practical in exposition as often as possible. Intellectual study only of our Theosophy will not speedily better the world. It must, of course, have effect through immortal ideas once more set in motion, but while we are waiting for those ideas to bear fruit among men a revolution may break out

and sweep us away. We should do as Buddha taught his disciples, preach, practise, promulgate, and illustrate our doctrines. He spoke to the meanest of men with effect, although having a deeper doctrine for greater and more learned minds. Let us, then, acquire the art of practical exposition of ethics based on our theories and enforced by the fact of Universal Brotherhood.

SAFEGUARD AGAINST SUPERSTITION

The right of private judgment is a necessary corrective to the principle of authority. It limits the power of dogmas that have ceased to be examined and of truths that have ceased to be open to further experimental verification or disproof. The heretic and the unqualified amateur—a Hahnemann in medicine, a Mayer in physics, a Mesmer in psychology, a Samuel Butler in biology—unearth buried possibilities to which the orthodox, whether in science or theology, are either smugly indifferent or downright hostile. Without continuous appeal to private judgment, openmindedness would disappear; and the world would be locked in a circle of consistent, self-enclosed errors it mistook for eternal truths.

But in all matters of truth, private judgment has no standing except as a starting point for a fresh revision of public judgment. One cannot entertain a private judgment about the sum of the angles of a triangle except as the foundation for a new system of geometry in which a different series of postulates will be laid down. . . . Only a minute span of experience is really open to private verification and adequate experimental proof: the rest must be taken on faith in the integrity of authority, in science no less than in theology.

As a healthy safeguard against superstition, science and reason must keep open the right of private investigation and private judgment: but only so that ultimately these efforts may be collectively verified and sealed with the proof of other men's repeated experiments and collated interpretations. This verification of truth by a collective historic process is what knits men together in a universal society that overpasses the boundaries of space and time, and eventually removes . . . errors due merely to one's position in space or time. This process begins, not with each new investigator, but with the historic heritage that makes his existence possible, his language comprehensible, and his work rational.

—LEWIS MUMFORD

on the lookout

Pretentious Words

Some legitimate complaints against social science are entered by Nelson W. Aldrich, Jr., in a review-essay in the July *Harper's*. The occasion for his remarks is notice of Stanislav Andreski's *Social Science as Sorcery,* a book which calls the workers in this field to account for an abuse of language, among other things. Expanding on this theme, Mr. Aldrich points out that the prestige of science results mainly from the supposed precision and admitted predictive power of the natural or "hard" science. Hoping for similar authority, social scientists, he says, have tried to endow their words with a similar precision, which has the effect of creating a jargon which neither clarifies what they have to say nor increases the understanding of human nature. This jargon, Aldrich maintains, is an effort "to reduce the infinitely complex and problematic relationships among groups of men and individuals to the state of molecules and atoms."

Role of Originality

While gifted thinkers have from time to time enriched the language with new insights through the invention of novel terms and phrases, and have also altered common meanings in the service of new ideas, they did not cram theories filled with ambiguity or uncertainty into the limited structures of the natural-science kind of language, in the hope of making their jargon a sound foundation for subsequent additions. He says:

> But the social scientific ethos today, when it isn't content merely to accumulate ever-mounting slag heaps of "data," seeks nothing less than to render an understanding of men and society that will last for all time, or at least that can be built on, as the propositions of natural science have been built on, to yield "progress." This ambition is doomed to failure, not alone by the refractoriness of men (who, after all, can read what social scientists are saying about them as molecules cannot) but by language itself. Words, concepts, and generalization cannot be frozen in Lucite like seahorses or dandelions; they will always elude our grasp, flying off into metaphor, de-

generating into cliché, massing and regrouping for new shocks of recognition, old epiphanies of the new.

The Dreadful Euphemisms

Moreover, the reduction of the "incommensurables" involved in the study of human nature and motivations to an "objective" nomenclature obscures the fact that human actions have moral implications, and makes them appear as merely neutral phenomena. The reviewer comments:

> What balm there is in thinking of one's social standing as "ascribed" rather than "inherited," or "achieved" rather than "acquired." How reassuring to think of "molding" or "indoctrinating" one's fellows as a process of "socialization." How liberating to call punishment "negative reinforcement," or to group muggers, revolutionaries, and homosexuals under the study of "deviance."

Isolation, Not Liberation

In summing up, Mr. Aldrich points to the pitfalls in depending on language to bear the burden of insights which lose both meaning and impact when there is no involvement of the feeling nature:

> Learning a new language can be liberating. But the liberation is of the most dangerous kind; it is a liberation of the word from the thing, of sign from referent, and ultimately of me from me and us from ourselves. It is no good, either, to point to all those splendid tracts of the unknown in human behavior that are now known thanks to an intrepid social science. For without a common language to express it, the hitherto unknown begins to look suspiciously like a blueprint to Yeats' Byzantium, a travesty of imagination. In the end, we shall have to learn what George P. Elliot writes somewhere: "To know more of the truth than you can feel is death to the spirit."

"Fall of Ideals"

This "death to the spirit" which Mr. Aldrich finds to be the characteristic blight of social science was the chief ground of Michael Polanyi's critique of modern historians in an article in the *American Scholar* in the autumn issue of 1966. Writing on the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, Polanyi shows, by direct citation, that the revolt of the Hungarians was a heroic demand for a society which honored truth above ideology. It was in behalf of the freedom of mind that the Western democracies all claim to affirm and believe in. Yet it took three years of soul-searching on

the part of one professional scholar in the social sciences to admit that the Hungarian revolutionaries were motivated by a devotion to truth. Value-free, "cool" historical science could not allow a judgment acknowledging the reality of moral causation. "That is why," Polanyi said, "the Hungarian revolutionary movement, which revived the ideals of 1848, and which claimed that truth and justice should be granted power over public affairs, has met with such a cold reception by the science of political behavior." He concluded: "Modern academic theories of politics, on the contrary, give support to the doctrine that denies that human ideals can be an independent power in human affairs." This is "death to the spirit" indeed. For contrast with modern treatises on social science, one might look at Madame Blavatsky's discussion of moral and social issues, in her article, "The Fall of Ideals."

Down in Illinois

Excavations in a cornfield in the Illinois River Valley have yielded evidence of a primitive sedentary culture in North America as early as 6,000 B.C. Artifacts including fragments of pottery and other materials suggest to the archaeologists that these people settled down in permanent homes without pursuing agriculture, and seem to have survived for thousands of years. A report in the *New York Times* relates:

> In the Koster cornfield, archaeologists have uncovered evidence of the fact that prehistoric man dwelled along the lower Illinois River Valley for more than 8,000 years—from about 6,000 B.C. to A.D. 1200. . . . That fact, when taken together with remarkable bones and artifacts discovered, make Koster, as the site has come to be known, one of the most important and fascinating archaeological sites to be discovered in North America in the past quarter century. To date, investigators have uncovered 15 distinct horizons (the archaeological term for strata bearing traces of human habitation), each in an excellent state of preservation. These horizons show that man has lived in Koster on 15 different occasions in prehistoric times.

New Style Archaeology?

The earliest yet known signs of man in North America, found at Clovis, New Mexico, are dated at about 9500 B.C. The oldest houses discovered at Koster have pushed back the date at which sedentary populations were believed to have lived here, and opened new speculation about the culture of the men who built

them. Dr. Stuart Struever, leader of the expedition, describes a change in American archaeology in the past decade which is encouraging researchers to look for clues to the culture of the men who inhabited the past, not to identify them by the artifacts they left behind. He says:

> Archaeology is a very old discipline but it hasn't developed greatly. I'd liken the degree of sophistication in archaeology to the state of sophistication in medicine in about 1850. Archaeology has developed the capacity to dig a lot of stuff out of the ground but has not yet developed the capacity to understand what's been unearthed. Archaeologists in the past have emphasized art and architectural history, and have characterized prehistoric cultures by a series of artifact types. They would describe a culture as the "bell-beaker folk" after some such artifact they dug up. It's like calling Americans the "Chevrolet people," instead of calling us capitalists. Chevrolet is an item; capitalism is behavior.

Man Is Homo Sapiens

No doubt diggers on the sites of ancient cultures have a tendency to be carried away by one or two apparently "significant" finds, just as the fraudulent "Piltdown Jaw" led to far-reaching assumptions in anthropological theory, but Dr. Struever's correction of "Chevrolet people" to "capitalists" is hardly an epoch-making revision. A well-rounded theory of "behavior" may be less misleading than conceptions based on a single clue, but there are higher levels of culture which a behavioral reading of the past may effectively conceal. A few years ago, writing in the *American Scholar* for the Winter of 1966-67, Lewis Mumford proposed a much more profound reform in the methods of studying man's prehistorical past. Objecting to the unique emphasis on the discovery of "tools," Mumford asked:

> Why is it that the lowest existing peoples, who support a hand-to-mouth existence with a few tools and weapons, nevertheless have elaborate ceremonials, a complicated kinship, and a finely differentiated language, capable of expressing every aspect of their experience?

Other Methods Needed

How and what men think are surely as important as their implements, weapons, and other "artifacts," although admittedly more difficult to trace. And there is the further complication that behind even the conscious thoughts of the people of a time and

place, the shaping influences of a hidden destiny may be working themselves out. It is too much, of course, to ask that the science of archaeology, as presently constituted, give light on these obscure matters. Yet it is necessary to consider them because of the common tendency to summarize and dispose of entire cycles of past history in terms of a few scattered remains, somewhat as Dr. Struever indicates has been the habit of recent researchers. If discoveries such as those made in Illinois help to stretch the minds of modern investigators, opening up fresh possibilities as to the antiquity of man, well and good. Progress in understanding human history will doubtless be made step by step, with a great leap now and then, which may be hoped for, for example, when the still rejected idea of Atlantis begins to be taken seriously as the source of the ancient populations of the New World. But in the present the condition of archaeological science is still quite adequately described by a passage in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 406):

> The landmarks of the archaic history of the past are few and scarce, and those that men of science come across are mistaken for finger-posts of our little era. Even so-called "universal" (?) history embraces but a tiny field in the almost boundless space of the unexplored regions of our latest fifth Root-Race. Hence, every fresh sign-post, every new glyph of the hoary Past that is discovered, is added to the old stock of information, to be interpreted on the same lines of pre-existing conceptions, and without any reference to the special cycle of thought which that particular glyph may belong to. How can Truth ever come to light if this method is never changed!

Appeal from Prisoners

Jessica Mitford's article in the August *Harper's*, "The Torture Cure," gives distressing evidence that even well-intentioned programs can be turned to anti-human ends. In July, 1972, a report by inmates of Marion Federal Penitentiary was addressed to the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Its authors, the Federal Prisoners' Coalition, were convicts who had been penalized for refusing to participate in the prison's behavioral research programs and removed to the segregation unit. Their account of the sinister transformation of rehabilitation techniques into ruthless pressure for conformity is described by Miss Mitford:

> The first step, according to the report, is to sever the inmate's ties with his family by transferring him to some remote prison

> where they will be unable to visit him. There he is put in isolation, deprived of mail and other privileges, until he agrees to participate in Dr. Groder's Transactional Analysis program. If he succumbs, he will be moved to new living quarters where he will be surrounded by members of Dr. Groder's "prisoner thought-reform team," and subjected to intense group pressure. "His emotional, behavioral, and psychic characteristics are studied by the staff and semiprofessional prisoners to detect vulnerable points of entry to stage attack-sessions around. During these sessions, on a progressively intensified basis, he is shouted at, his fears played on, his sensitivities ridiculed, and concentrated efforts made to make him feel guilty for real or imagined characteristics or conduct. . . . Every effort is made to heighten his suggestibility and weaken his character structure so that his emotional responses and thought-flow will be brought under group and staff control as totally as possible."

Sources of "Theory"

According to Miss Mitford, the use of these methods in prisons had its origin more than ten years ago. She speaks of a seminar of prison wardens and psychologists chaired by the then director of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons, James V. Bennett, in which attention was given to a paper by Dr. Edgar H. Schein, "Man Against Man: Brainwashing." It had to do with psychological methods for changing behavior patterns and old attitudes. Miss Mitford writes in summary:

> Dr. Schein, who said he got most of his ideas from studying brainwashing techniques used by North Korean and Chinese Communists on GI prisoners of war, cautioned his audience not to be put off by this fact: "These same techniques in the service of different goals may be quite acceptable to us. . . . I would like to have you think of brainwashing not in terms of politics, ethics, and morals, but in terms of the deliberate changing of human behavior and attitudes by a group of men who have relatively complete control over the environment in which the captive population lives."

Dr. Schein went on to speak of the use of these methods in prisons, and today, Miss Mitford suggests, officials in the federal prison system have taken his counsels to heart. Practically everyone would agree that it is wrong to kill and steal, to practice fraud and to sell illicit narcotics, but the manipulations practiced on the inmates of the federal prisons may constitute an even worse

invasion of the rights of other men, even if they have been convicted of crimes.

Methods of Persuasion

Miss Mitford continues with further quotation from the statement drawn up by the Federal Prisoners' Coalition:

> ". . . It is also driven in to him that society, in the guise of its authorities, is looking out for his best interests and will help if he will only permit it to do so. Help him be 'reborn' as a highly probable 'winner in the game of life,' is a way this comes across in the group's jargon." Once reborn as a winner, he will be moved into a plush living area equipped with stereo, tape recorders, typewriters, books. He is now ready to indoctrinate newcomers into the mysteries of the group "and like a good attack dog, he is graded and evaluated on his demonstrated capacity to go for the vulnerable points of any victim put before him." The entire program is made self-perpetuating and economically feasible by the participants doing the work themselves, says the report: "They are taught to police not only themselves but others, to inform on one another in acceptable fashion—as bringing out misconduct of another in a truth-session is not considered informing even if a staff member is present."

An Expanding Program

By no stretch of the imagination can a program of this sort be termed "therapy." Brainwashing may be as good a description as any, but the important thing to recognize is that the idea of becoming a "winner" in the game of material acquisition can hardly be regarded as useful in the reconstruction of character. It seems more to the point to admit that neither psychologists nor prison officials know much about the reconstruction of character, that prisons are themselves evidence of the failure of the public system of education, and that the kind of self-regenerative programs the convicts themselves are able to devise might be far superior to anything that the behavioral scientists have offered so far. Actually, the report written by the members of the Federal Prisoners' Coalition reveals a better understanding of human integrity and the possibilities of change for the better than the program which they find so flawed with anti-human methods.

Miss Mitford's article is long and detailed, with much about state prison methods also. In all these institutions, it seems, there is a strong movement for the application of behavioristic tech-

niques, on the ground, as one psychologist has claimed, that "the day has come when we can combine sensory deprivation with drugs, hypnosis, and astute manipulation of reward and punishment to gain almost absolute control over an individual's behavior. . . ." Meanwhile, an announcement from the federal Bureau of Prisons tells of a new correctional facility being erected near Butner, North Carolina, where there will be intensive application of the program which Miss Mitford has described at some length, and to which the Prisoners' Coalition objects.

Quite evidently, nothing has been added to the understanding of crime since publication, years ago, of "A Psychiatric Study of Recidivists," a paper by Charles B. Thompson, then senior psychiatrist in attendance at the Psychiatric Clinic, Court of General Sessions, New York City. And his findings, apparently, have had little attention. Crime, according to Dr. Thompson, grows out of the obsessive egocentricity developed in a competitive society, and from the spurious "morality" of "good" and "bad" categories. These influences merge in the individual with the following effect:

> That which is "good" is to the advantage of this "I" and is to be sought, and that which is "bad" is to the disadvantage of the "I" and is to be avoided. . . . Each one becomes so conditioned that his thought automatically is "how will what is going on in this moment cause *me* gain or loss?" Normal individuals then are conditioned to a self-preoccupation. . . . when we are confronted with a prisoner in our examining room, we are studying an individual who, like ourselves, is the resultant of this same continual conditioning process, for the criminal and the neurotic and the law-abiding citizen are all members of the same social structure or society, which, as we have described, automatically conditions all of its members to react affectively and disproportionately to this "I" image. However prevalent throughout society, man's affective response to this image or stimulus word "I" does not represent health or wholeness . . . in other words it is the basis of the personality traits which in their extreme form characterize the recidivist . . . this conditioned, separative "I" image represents a common denominator for the compulsive, egocentric acquisitiveness of man throughout the species, including the reaction of the noncriminals as well as the criminals. Civilization's outstanding characteristic as well as its fundamental anomaly is its systematic training of each individual to get for himself at the expense of others.

The Social Matrix

Here, in virtually the language of the behaviorists, is a true diagnosis of the widespread criminal tendencies of the times. The recidivist or repeater criminal is one who typifies the triumph of the conditioning process to which we are all more or less exposed. Dr. Thompson carries his analysis further:

> In our superficial angers and hatreds or in our agreements, in our wars and in our equally superficial and evanescent arrangements called peace, "normal" man, like the criminal, is himself a repeater of pathological reactions. Naturally, then, . . . the nature of the behavior of the recidivist is not far to seek, for the problem of the recidivist is but the problem of man's behavior generally.
>
> We might as well keep in mind that society has its own crimes which, however, are not recognized as such because they are committed on so large a scale. Society has its mass-homicides called wars, its mass robberies called invasions, its wholesale larcenies called empire-building. As long as the individual's behavior fits in with the mass-reaction, it is considered "good" behavior. As long as he does not question by word or deed the validity of the mass behavior he may be called a "good citizen."

Obviously, something far beyond behavioral conformity must be sought as a remedy for crime. It is equally obvious that prisons are not places where any kind of genuine reform can take place.

Useful Ideas on Cycles

William Irwin Thompson, writing in *Harper's* for September, suggests that human development naturally follows an alternating pattern which he identifies as the two necessary aspects of growth, in periods of, roughly, seven years, throughout life. Speaking of the development of independence, he says:

> As creatures begin to take their own time to move *with* life rather than *through* life, we can begin to see that there is a new rhythm to the way the pageant unfolds itself.
>
> No longer is there a single identity to man, the functionary; now instead there are two gods within the self that pulse in a cycle alternating between *Homo Ludens,* the being of play, and *Homo Faber,* the doer of work. In the first cycle one experiences a period of creative expansion, in the other, a period of consolidation into form.

He says further that our educational and economic institutions, in contrast, assume that human development proceeds in a straight

line "from bad to better, from poverty to progress, from ignorance to knowledge, from grade one to twenty." Mr. Thompson maintains that the periods of late childhood and adolescence each provide distinctive opportunities for growth according to this alternating pattern:

> From the ages of seven to fourteen, when they delight in collecting objects and facts, children should be in school. But by their teens they should be released from school and, in good Maoist fashion, sent out to work and play in rural communes. At fourteen the individual begins to experience a new phase of creative expansion. . . . To try to contain people in schools at this stage of life is to do violence to their whole nature. They need to grow and develop through emotional and physical activities, not through sitting in libraries trying to understand the passionate abstractions of older people.

Against the Grain

Mr. Thompson believes that adolescents, compelled to work at being "intellectual" when the tide of their being runs in another direction, will naturally try to turn the "work" they are not ready to do into "play." However, in persons from twenty-one to twenty-eight, he finds a clearly discernible change:

> After a period of physical and emotional growth through feeling, one begins to surfeit on "feely" approaches to ideas and begins to hunger for what Yeats called "the mastery of what is difficult." University teachers readily admit that the best students are those who have dropped out and later returned to college. I first noticed this difference when I had students of different ages in a small seminar. The younger students couldn't care less about Yeats as Yeats; they looked upon the poems as Rorschachs for their own inner workings. The older students were impatient with the younger ones. They were tired of looking into a mirror and wanted to break out of the closet of their own emotions; they wanted to learn how to read a difficult text and see what Yeats had in mind.

Life Stages

An understanding of these cycles of growth, Thompson suggests, might reduce many of our educational problems. An educational system affording alternating periods of "creative expansion" and "consolidation of form" could serve the whole population at any stage of life, somewhat as Ivan Illich has suggested. In this way the whole community would become the classroom, making available to the learner whatever he is ready to learn. The concluding

stage of life is characterized as a contemplative period of balance which does not require direct involvement in either alternative, but gives an opportunity for assimilation, the importance of which is often not recognized:

> This contemplative mode of being is neither work nor play, and thus those who see old age as the absence of work and therefore the presence of play greatly mistake it. People who think that the end of life is play, retirement, and a return to *Homo Ludens* do not recognize how most people hate retirement and compensatorily hold on to objects and facts for all that they are worth. Old people are supremely the people of opinions, and it is not important whether the opinions are right or wrong, for they are old enough to know how complicated everything is; rather it is important that opinions are held, for in holding on to them one holds on to life.

Application to History

Grasp of these cycles of life, the author says, reveals a dynamic quality which our "linear institutions" do not take into account. The revolution in present society may be recognized as bringing opportunities for deeper understanding of socio-historical processes, and this suggests that the cycles Mr. Thompson has noted in individual life also apply to the larger life of nations and races. In this historical perspective, the development of men, not the manipulation of their "behavior," becomes the criterion of values. Yet today, the university, as an institution, has abandoned its traditional function of encouraging this kind of speculation, providing, instead, rationalizations for economic systems and exploitation. Thompson observes:

> The university was first a village, and then, in the days of Oxford and Cambridge, it became a town; in the era of Harvard and Berkeley, it became a city-state. Now, through the Kissingers and Skinners of Harvard, the tiny city-state, like ancient Rome, is growing to become the new empire of behavioral civilization. Because history is part of the humanities, it has no place in "value-free" social science; and so what is missing in the grand imperial vision is a historical memory and a tragic sense that a society that seeks to live like an empire will die like one.

Conceptions of History

A review of José Ortega y Gasset's *An Interpretation of Universal History*, recently published in English, presents Ortega's his-

torical perspective in contrast to that of Arnold Toynbee (*World,* July 31). The twelve lectures which comprise the book were delivered between 1948 and 1949 in Madrid. "By *history,*" Ortega said, "I understand the study of human reality from the most remote past up to and including living men." He took exception to what he regarded as Toynbee's mechanistic interpretation of historical reality, as no more than a series of challenges and responses which, translated by the historian as acts, constitute civilizations. The reviewer, Charles Lam Markmann, comments:

> The basic flaw that Ortega diagnoses in all Toynbee's work is one that compels our consideration: Toynbee, Ortega charges, always views every civilization "from without, as one contemplates the mountains; and thus he makes the soul of the tourist which God has given the English go wandering through the vastness of history." . . . [The] journalistic accumulation of data, however exhaustive, however accurate, "ignores the fact that the collective life of a people, a nation, is an intimate—and to a certain extent a secret—matter, very like what those words mean when one says of a personal life that it is an intimacy within itself, and no one who looks at it from the outside can easily come to understand it."

Thread and Drama of Life

In Ortega's view, real history is acted out in the inner life of a people or a nation, in their pursuit of its meaning. As in the life of the individual, it is

> something that differs from the idea of challenge-response in Toynbee, and, in my judgment, effectively constitutes human life: namely, that no surroundings or change of surroundings can in itself be described as an obstacle, a difficulty, and a challenge for man, but that the difficulty is always relative to the projects that man creates in his imagination, to what he customarily calls his ideals; in short, relative to what man wants to be. This affords us an idea of challenge-and-response which is much deeper and more decisive than the merely anecdotal, adventitious, and accidental idea that Toynbee proposes. In its light all of human life appears to us as what it is permanently: a dramatic confrontation and struggle of man with the world and not a mere occasional maladjustment which is produced at certain moments.

Mr. Markmann pays his respects to Ortega as a first-rate thinker, the wholeness of whose vision reaches beyond the confinements of contemporary philosophical assumptions to the root, which is to be found in man himself.